

VZCZCXRO9495
PP RUEHROV
DE RUEHROV #0057 2121432
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 301432Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0963
INFO RUEHTO/AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY 0008
RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE PRIORITY 0003
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN 0997

UNCLAS VATICAN 000057

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KIRF](#) [ZI](#) [VT](#)
SUBJECT: SANT'EGIDIO ON ZIMBABWE

REF: MAPUTO 000652

¶1. (SBU) The Community of Sant'Egidio point person on mediation and international relations, Dr. Claudio Betti, confirmed that --if asked-- Sant'Egidio is available to promote peaceful change in Zimbabwe. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) During a meeting with poloff on July 25, Betti reiterated an offer made by Sant'Egidio's President Marco Impagliazzo in Maputo, reported in reftel, to reach out to President Mugabe. Members of Sant'Egidio in Rome know President Mugabe personally and could --if asked-- relay messages to him regarding possible solutions to the situation in his country.

¶3. (SBU) Betti stated that Sant'Egidio, which is comprised of an international network of some 60,000 volunteers in 70 nations working on conflict resolution and charitable projects and which successfully mediated the 1992 peace agreement between warring factions in Mozambique, did not have a plan for Zimbabwe and would only step in to facilitate a dialogue if requested by the USG. Betti said that such an initiative would be carried out by Rome-based Italian members of the Community, rather than by local volunteers. He added that Sant'Egidio does not have a relationship with Zimbabwe's opposition.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: While Betti was not optimistic about the prospects of Mugabe relinquishing power, he confirmed Sant'Egidio's willingness to seek peaceful change in Zimbabwe. In order not interfere with other strategies to produce change, however, Sant'Egidio is unlikely to undertake any new initiative at this time unless the USG supports it. End comment.

GLENDON